

(a) whether the Government propose to divert the surplus water of river Brahmaputra to other regions in the country;

(b) if so, the States to which the water is to be diverted;

(c) the percentage of water received from the river being utilised at present along with the percentage of unutilised water which flows into the sea;

(d) whether the Government have prepared any scheme so far to make the full utilisation of the surplus water of the river;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the estimated cost involved therein?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): (a) to (f). A National Perspective

for Water Resources Development prepared by the Government, among other links, envisages inter-linkages between Brahmaputra-Ganga-Mahanadi for the purpose of transferring waters from surplus basins to the deficit basins. Considering that only a very small fraction of Brahmaputra water (less than 2 per cent) is utilised and the rest flows into the sea, the National Water Development Agency has confined the studies to the assessment of water availability in Brahmaputra and its tributaries, namely, Manas and Sankosh to determine the quantum of surplus water available for transferring and top-sheet examination of links and reservoirs. Separately, it has carried out preliminary feasibility studies for inter-linking Mahanadi-Godavari and Krishna under the Peninsular Component. In the absence of detailed project reports, aspects like benefits to different regions, outlays required, completion schedule and cost involved cannot be quantified.

Tourism Potential in Arunachal Pradesh and North Eastern Region

4064. SHRI LAETA UMBREY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is tremendous tourism potential in Arunachal Pradesh and the other North Eastern States;

(b) if so, the details of the steps taken for its promotion;

(c) whether any Act is required to be amended for allowing foreign tourists in the region; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the Act is likely to be amended?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHVRAO SCINDIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The promotion of tourism in any specific State is primarily the responsibility of the State Government. However, the Central Government provide assistance by way of publicity and financial support to specific schemes subject to availability of funds.

(c) and (d). Foreigners are not allowed to visit some parts of North Eastern States without special permission under the Foreigners (Restricted Areas) Order, 1963 and Foreigners (Protected Areas) Order, 1958. This restriction is reviewed from time to time and suitable relaxations are made to increase the flow of foreign tourists to the region.

Postal Facilities in Tamil Nadu

4065. SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state: